

media release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grants Awarded for Colorado Specialty Crops

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – Ten grants totaling more than \$675,000 have been awarded through the Colorado Department of Agriculture’s Specialty Crops Program.

Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, seeds, greenhouse and nursery products and sod. Funds are received by CDA from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, which is aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops.

“This funding has provided a tremendous opportunity for Colorado’s agricultural industry to pursue a wide variety of innovative projects,” said Tom Lipetzky, Colorado Department of Agriculture Markets Division Director. “Over the last five years, these USDA funds have helped Colorado producers conduct research and develop markets to enhance the state’s specialty crop industry.”

Fiscal year 2013 funds were recently approved by the USDA for the following projects:

1. **Southern Colorado Food Hub**, Avondale, CO, to establish infrastructure and services for the benefit of the agricultural community in southeastern Colorado.

2. **Colorado Certified Potato Growers Association**, Monte Vista, CO, to introduce and emphasize specialty potatoes at the Produce Marketing Association's (PMA) Fresh Summit Expo in 2014.
3. **Colorado Department of Agriculture**, Lakewood, CO, for development of a Colorado Pavilion at the PMA Fresh Summit Expo in 2014.
4. **Colorado Proud**, Lakewood, CO, for promotion of Colorado specialty crops in the summer of 2014.
5. **Colorado State University**, Fort Collins, CO, to support small acreage, socially disadvantaged and beginning specialty crop producers. Funds will provide for a specialty crops coordinator and for producer grants for on-farm research and demonstration marketing projects.
6. **Plant Select**, Fort Collins, CO, to educate consumers on native and/or drought-tolerant plants by utilizing the Plant Select brand initiative.
7. **Colorado Nursery and Greenhouse Association**, Denver, CO, to increase involvement and education in gardening via the Plant Something Colorado project.
8. **Colorado Potato Administrative Committee**, Monte Vista, CO, in partnership with Colorado State University to screen potato germplasm for flavor as a potato breeding selection tool.
9. **Denver Urban Gardens**, Denver, CO, to promote specialty crops, small farmers and community health through Denver's Horse Barn Farmers' Market in the Five Points neighborhood.
10. **Colorado Wine Industry Development Board**, Boulder, CO, to explore incorporating hybrids and other cold-hardy grapes into blends to make the wine character more appealing to consumers.

To learn more about the Colorado Specialty Crop Program visit
www.colorado.gov/ag/specialtycropgrant or call (303) 239-4123.

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